

# 2023



## Annual Report

TEAM SOLHEIM IN HONDURAS





This photo of Nick popped up on the screen as we waited for him at the end of his very first solo roller coaster ride. I prepared myself to wrap him up in my arms and wipe his little tears. But when he finally appeared, he was running with joy. "Again! Again! Again!" he shouted.

Sometimes I fear Steve and I are walking around with a similar shell-shocked, panicked look on our faces. As we seek to give up more and more control to the Lord, life and ministry are more unpredictable and intimidating. We still sense Him waiting to console us in our moments of trepidation and heartbreak. But now we're learning to just hang on a little bit tighter through all these twists and turns. We're looking ahead with renewed enthusiasm knowing that there is still a wild ride to come, but eager to experience all that He has planned for us. "Again! Again! Again!" we cry out to Our Father.

We give God the glory for this exciting roller coaster and we pray for the courage and strength to just enjoy the ride.

Blessings,

*Steve & Kelly Solheim*

Steve & Kelly Solheim  
Team Solheim in Honduras  
a ministry of World Gospel Mission

# English Classes

We continue to teach English classes in the village public school. Because we were limited by half-days in 2022, we weren't able to provide the quality of classes to which we aspire. Steve struggled with younger students who were unable to write their names or even hold a pencil because they were unable to attend school because of the COVID-19 shutdown. He decided to focus on basic vocabulary learning only. Meanwhile, Kelly was able to implement some of her recent teacher training with a particularly successful group project that asked students to write and illustrate their own books to show what they've learned.

We are hopeful for a more normal school year for 2023 and will resume English classes following the Semana Santa holiday break.

# Lucy's Libros

The mobile library program has largely been on hiatus due to minimal classroom time. However, we do have plans to re-establish the library at a local private school following the Semana Santa holiday. Unfortunately, we lost our volunteer director of the program due to other obligations and are currently seeking a teacher to lead the library.

In the meantime, we have initiated a shared resource program with Proyecto Alas in Talanga. They are currently establishing their own library program using our resources. We have plans for future collaborations and book exchanges with their ministry.



# Club Aslan

In October we celebrated the 4-year anniversary of our after-school program, Club Aslan! The club continues to be the ministry with the potential for the greatest impact in our area. We currently have more than 50 students enrolled and participating in Club Aslan from the village.

In addition to our anniversary party, we also hosted our annual Christmas and Easter celebrations. These events are special because we open our doors to parents and members of the community. We've had limited response so far, but plan to promote these occasions more this coming year. Although all of our activities are designed to grow relationship with God, these events are a unique opportunity to invite guest speakers to share the Gospel message openly and clearly with our youth.

In January this year we were preparing to turn down an invitation to participate in church-organized youth rally in our area when the Holy Spirit abruptly changed our plans. Instead of declining the invitation because it interfered with Club Aslan activities, we decided to invite our members to attend the event *with* us. This was a bold and scary move because the village is so resistant to the evangelical church and its activities. Many of our kids have never set foot in an evangelical church before. We were quite nervous about how they would react. But 10 kids signed up to attend! We borrowed a bus from a co-worker and took them to the 200+ person youth event.



There was an amazing speaker who preached about maintaining a holy reputation. This topic really resonated with our kids. Although they were a little shy and awkward at first, they really started to fit in well with their Christian counterparts by the end of the event. Club Aslan defeated the other church groups on the soccer field and came in second overall in the afternoon games (to much celebration and cheering!). We were walking on air when our little group started singing worship songs that they'd just learned at the top of their lungs on the bus ride home!

**And the victories just keep coming!** Typically when we leave La Esperanza for travel, our ministries are completely paused. This has been a difficult challenge for us, because we feel a strong burden to be a consistent presence in the lives of our young people. But when we had to be away from our ministry for six weeks recently, a young pastor agreed to lead Club Aslan with the help of our missionary co-workers, Gene and Robin, who provided transportation and support. Pastor Nery has visited Club Aslan many times over the last year and has a special gift of relating to the kids (especially on the soccer field!). While we were away, he not only kept the fun going, but he also gave weekly devotionals on topics such as the biblical basis for not using foul language. We have been so blessed by Pastor Nery's ministry and hope to find many new ways for him to serve at Club Aslan. In the meantime, we've set a goal to recruit and train up to 10 new volunteers this coming year. Please be in prayer for more Christian leaders in our community to come alongside us in this ministry!



# Teams

For the first time we invited what we like to call a "mini-team" to serve at the Central America WGM Missionary Retreat at Lago to Yojoa. This team of two were called to minister to our missionary kids during the retreat time. Not only did this allow parents to fully engage in retreat without worry, it also provided learning and growth opportunity for our kids through the VBS-style programming designed just for them by Sarah and Danielle. We considered this retreat to be one of the best we've attended and feel very proud of the level of care and attention our families received. And it was so good that Danielle is returning again this coming year with a new partner, Tessa, to pour into our MKs!

We are so blessed to partner and co-host these mini-teams alongside Lori Braatz, who is an amazing and gifted hostess. We have come to rely on her expertise and creativity when it comes to ministering with and to teams. So it only seemed natural to team up with her again for her first team this year at El Sembrador, which hailed from Friendship Church, our shared home church in Minnesota. Although, we didn't really add much to this team's experience (Lori had it all under control!), Kelly was able to help translate for the visiting dentist. We were also delighted to play games with the team members in our old ministry, El Nido, which has been revived at El Sembrador. And Steve really enjoyed the opportunity to work on Lori's apartment and make her feel more at home. He tinkered, repaired and even decorated! He was certainly excited to be working with his hands on these projects since so much of our ministry is relationship-based!





# New Partnership

We continue to work alongside our local contact, Sandra, who we met during our COVID relief efforts. At the end of the 2022 school year, she was asked to lead camp activities for the students of a local bilingual school, Southwest School. We provided resources and planning support for her program. This led to Kelly being asked to speak at the teacher's retreat a few weeks later. She encouraged the teachers to find creative ways to build relationship with their students. Kelly also judged the school's English spelling bee.



We're not sure how this new partnership will continue to develop or what opportunities it may lead to, but we look forward to continuing to serve Southwest School as time allows.

# Budget



We made a trip to the U.S. last summer to raise prayer and financial support. It was a very successful trip and we were able to recoup about \$500 in monthly support lost for various reasons throughout the previous year. We made a second trip this year to attend our home church's Mission Sunday event and follow-up on relationships we built the previous summer. Again, God continues to provide for our budget needs and we expect to raise another \$500 in monthly support by the time Steve finishes following up with those with whom we met.



Our financial accounts are struggling due to unexpected ministry opportunities and the current global financial situation. We are tightening our belts and trusting the Lord to provide!

# Personal Update

Steve graduated with his Leadership & Ministry degree from Grace Christian University. He's looking forward to using his new skills to grow our ministries.

At the end of last summer, we moved from our home of nearly six years after a dramatic and hasty eviction. We have settled into a new house not far from the old one, but still don't feel like it is home for the long-term. We are planning another move later this year when the current lease is up. We have remained involved in the "patronato" or neighborhood association of our previous neighborhood because our office is still located within its boundaries. We hope to find a home in the same neighborhood.

Have you noticed that the world is just a little bit brighter and more joyful these days? That's because on November 17, 2022, **Margot Synnøve Solheim** came into it! Nick and Evie are fantastic parents and we're very proud of them. **We are so excited to be Gram and Pop!**



Dear Children, let us not love with words or  
tongue, but with actions and in truth.

1 John 3:18

Thank You!

FOR YOUR PRAYERS & SUPPORT



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#gamesbringus together